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Palestine Situation

1. Flash reported on 30 January (Secret Control Arabian officials only):

"As a result of differences between the Mufti and the Arab League re JMWELI, the following command changes were recommended by Amos Fuchs who was acting as mediator. Recommendations were taken and official appointments have been made (probably during the week of January 9).

"Taha HASHIMI is to be "Organiser of the Revolution". As such he is supreme commander and will preside over all meetings of Arab League Military Committee with headquarters in Damascus. He will report to the President of Syria and to the Minister of Defense.

"Issaï SAFAT is to be in command of all troops.

"Fouad JAWHAR is to be head of guerrillas in Northern Palestine.

"HIRSI is to be head of transport and supply."

2. We have found out from a well-informed source that the day of the general attack against the Jews of Palestine and those living in Arab countries has been set at 13 February, unless in the meanwhile an order postponing the day should be issued. (Field Note: This might easily be the date.)

(Para. 2: [] B-2; 31 January 1946)

3. Joseph SAKUN, a Maronite from the vicinity of Haifa who is one of the members of the Palestine High Committee, arrived in Beirut at the end of last week from Egypt and stayed with his brother-in-law, Pierre JEMAZI (JEMAZI), chief of the Phalanges.

He told JEMAZI that the High Committee in Egypt had charged him and one of his colleagues to see the Grand Mufti, explain to him the situation in Palestine, and propose an armistice between Arabs and Jews in Haifa, Jaffa, and certain other places, as the Arabs are in an almost desperate situation, and cannot defend themselves against the modern weapons of the Jews.

"We tried to convince the Mufti," he said, "but he refused categorically, paying no attention to the despair of the Arabs who lack food, the necessities of life and arms, and who are faced with the interruption of all work.

"Certain representatives of the various Arab parties in Palestine, learning of the Mufti's answer to our proposals, have charged Nakhon NAKHON to approach the Mufti a gain and try to persuade him to agree to an armistice."

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SAHYUN thinks that if the Mufti continues to be obstinate, the High Committee will decide just the same to call a halt to the fighting in Haifa and certain other places.

(Para. 3: [] B-2; 28 January 1948)

4. Since the beginning of the war in Palestine, some 30,000 refugees have arrived in Lebanon. Most of these are Moslems, according to a member of the Permanent Bureau for Palestine. A member of the BAHN family of Haifa stated that the Christian families of Palestine are under double pressure from Moslems and Jews. This is so serious that Christian women no longer dare leave their houses for fear of rape by Moslems. (Field Note: The number of refugees, as well as the rape business, seems exaggerated.)

(Para. 4: [] B-4; 31 January 1948)

5. A rumor is being circulated by the French Legation in Beirut to the effect that the United States Government has requested the French Government to send French troops from her colonies to Palestine after the departure of the British. The reason for this is reportedly that the French colonies are near Palestine and the French are well informed about the Syrian and Lebanese borders with Palestine. Such French troops will assure security in the country until the partition is effected. Moslems in Syria and Lebanon are disturbed by this rumor because of their hatred of France.

(Para. 5: [] C-3; 31 January 1948)

6. Mr. Balce FAYIAU, one of the members of the Finance Committee of the Bureau for Palestine stated:

"When I noticed that certain of my colleagues of the Committee, especially the Moslems, had corrupt intentions concerning subscriptions for Palestine—to impose their wills or to attack certain people—then I preferred to resign. In fact, I presented my resignation, but it was refused."

(Para. 6: [] B-2; 21 January 1948)

7. Two weeks ago the Lebanese Government formed a military commission headed by Major Shambet SEUKAYR and sent it to Libya, Egypt, and perhaps other places to purchase munitions and arms for Palestine fighters. The Lebanese Government insisted that the Commission buy preferably British Tommy guns, bombs, and cartridges of all kinds.

(Para. 7: [] B-2; 21 January 1948)

(Field Note: In evaluating [] reports on this subject his strong anti-Arab prejudices should be born in mind.)

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